

Grace is known not only for her community service, but also for her competitive spirit in my annual charity bocce tournament. For the past eleven years, Grace has displayed a superior level of skill and sportsmanship on the bocce court. No tournament would be complete without Grace's ever-present smile and humor.

Even at 90 years of age, Grace maintains her high energy level and the organizing skills that made her such a leader. I would not be surprised if the phrase "growing old gracefully" was created to describe Grace Vigneau. She is loved by family and friends for her infectious enthusiasm, good will, and caring ways. Therefore, I ask my colleagues to rise with me today and celebrate the 90th birthday of Grace Vigneau and wish her continued health and happiness for years to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 10, 2002

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, on roll-call Nos. 283, 284 I would have voted "aye."

WATER RIGHTS IN CALIFORNIA

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 10, 2002

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, the following editorial was written by my fellow colleague from California, Representative GEORGE MILLER. It was published in The Los Angeles Times on June 20, 2002 under the title, "Dammning the Money Stream of the Water Profiteers."

I commend Representative MILLER for eloquently addressing the issue of water rights in California. I support the conviction that California's water belongs to all Californians. We should not allow big agribusiness to profit off antiquated government subsidies at the expense of California's water-strapped communities and family farms.

The following is a reprinted version of Mr. MILLER's editorial:

[From the Los Angeles Times, June 20, 2002]
DAMMING THE MONEY STREAM OF THE WATER PROFITEERS

(By George Miller)

Californians who recently learned a very expensive lesson about futures trading from Enron Corp. may soon get a second dose of market manipulation, this time courtesy of the federal government.

Instead of watching out for the water needs—and pocketbooks—of taxpayers, the Department of the Interior may soon sign long-term water contracts that provide multimillion-dollar windfalls to agricultural corporations at the expense of cities and consumers.

A hundred years ago, Congress made a bargain with farmers in the dry West: Taxpayers would subsidize dams, canals and water to promote settlement and irrigate family farms. In return, farmers would have to repay only a fraction of the true cost of the investment. The subsidies were locked into long-term contracts that the Interior Department signed with water districts promising to deliver millions of acre-feet.

Yet for decades, some reclamation beneficiaries in California's Central Valley have been farming the taxpayers as much as the land.

Huge companies maneuvered to capture the multibillion-dollar subsidy intended for family farmers, leading Congress to close the loopholes and reduce the subsidies that encourage overuse of water resources.

Now the original water contracts are expiring, and Interior must negotiate new contracts under much tighter terms dictated by a historic 1992 water reform law. Given the growing demand for water throughout the state, some of these giant farm operations have a new scheme for enriching themselves at public expense: Instead of using subsidized water for growing crops, they want to sell some of their government-provided water back to the government—or to water-short cities or farms—for huge profits.

Bennett Raley, who is in charge of the federal water program at the Interior Department, approves. "We believe in the free market," Raley says. "It's their water." Well, actually, it isn't "their" water.

The water originates in the mountains and the rivers of this great state. It belongs not to any particular contractor or farmer but to all the people of California, who paid for its development, storage and delivery with costly subsidies. The Interior Department's customers enjoy the use of the water only because of their contracts with the government, and those contracts now need to be renegotiated.

The government signed contracts to provide subsidized water for food and fiber production, not to award a public resource to a particular group that could convert it into an annuity for personal profit. If there is a market in California for \$1,000 an acre-foot—and there is—why would any responsible federal official sign a 25-year contract to sell water to farming concerns that will resell it for a profit of 800% or 1,000%?

If the water market is that healthy, why shouldn't the taxpayers, who built and subsidized the projects in the first place, get to sell the water for a large profit?

If the contractor's intent in signing a new contract is merely to market a portion of the water, then, learning from the Enron example, we should not be concentrating public resources in the hands of a few private individuals.

Yet farming interests, many with longstanding ties to the Bush administration, are pressuring federal officials to sign new contracts that deliver them control of vast amounts of water.

Water is already an overcommitted resource in California, with competing interests divided among cities, agriculture, industry and the environment. Global warming has raised concerns of diminished Sierra snowpacks and runoffs in the future, which would reduce our ability to fill our reservoirs.

Surely this is not the time for responsible government officials to commit water to one group of contractors and force the rest of the state to cut deals that enrich private interests from the sale of public resources.

Doesn't it make sense for Raley and his co-workers at the Interior Department to use great caution in deciding how much of the public's subsidized water to include in those new contracts, instead of promising vast volumes that irrigators will turn around and resell—perhaps even to the government—at a huge profit?

It's not their water, Mr. Raley, unless you give it away.

WILLIAMS SISTERS AT WIMBLEDON

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 10, 2002

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Serena Williams on her impressive win at Wimbledon. Over the holiday weekend, Serena beat her older sister, Venus, to win her third grand slam title but her first Wimbledon title. I congratulate the two sisters on a great match.

Serena said she gained a lot of momentum from her French Open win, and it showed. In the end, Serena won in straight sets. With the win, Serena became the first woman to win the French Open and Wimbledon back-to-back since Steffi Graf in 1996.

The next day, the two sisters teamed up to win the Wimbledon Doubles Title over French Open champions, Paola Suarez and Virginia Ruano Pascual. While the weather did not look great, the skill these young ladies displayed certainly was. It was an entertaining match, but in the end the Williams sisters proved too strong for their opponents. They won 6-2, 7-5. With that win, the sisters' 2002 Wimbledon record was 19 wins and 1 loss. The one loss came when Venus lost to Serena in the Singles Finals.

Serena now is ranked number one in the world. Venus, who previously was ranked first, is now second. They are quickly becoming the most dominant figures in tennis. They are extremely skilled, they can hit both forehands and backhands with pinpoint accuracy. And their serves are clocked at well over 100 mph.

Venus and Serena enter each match well-prepared and confident, but the sisters always handle themselves with grace. What is perhaps most telling about them, though, is their love for each other. Even after battling it out on the tennis courts for nearly two hours, Venus said, "Serena is my sister and I'm really happy she won, especially her first time. I would have loved to have won. At the same time, I'm so happy for her."

These young ladies are true competitors, but also great individuals. Again, I would like to congratulate Serena on her win this past Saturday. I wish both of them, Serena and Venus, the best of luck in upcoming tournaments.

SAN MATEO SCHOOL STUDENTS DISCUSS WHAT THE AMERICAN FLAG STANDS FOR

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 10, 2002

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues six of my constituents who have been selected winners in a very important essay contest. The six were authors of first, second, and third place winners in an Americanism essay competition for school children in grades 5 and 6 and in grades 7 and 8.

This contest was designed to promote and encourage patriotism. The theme for this year's competition was "What the Flag of the